

## Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00

PA-02 SIL-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 DODE-00 /048 W

----- 109513

O R 051325Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

TO USDOC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4550

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 DHAHRAN 0015/1

FOR CAGNE DIRECTOR HALE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, SA

SUBJECT: BUILDEX 76 - DHAHRAN AS POSSIBLE SITE FOR EXHIBITION

REF: JIDDA 0007, 75 JIDDA 8419

1. SUMMARY - CONGEN UNDERSTANDS FROM VISITING AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN THAT SELECTION OF SITE FOR BUILDEX 76 STILL VERY MUCH UP IN AIR. BUSINESSMAN HAS PROPOSED HIS COMPANY ERECT TWO LARGE STRUCTURES ON CONGEN COMPOUND THAT WOULD BE USED TO HOUSE BUILDEX 76.

LATER, STRUCTURE WOULD BE PURCHASED AND CONVERTED INTO SCHOOL BUILDINGS. CONGEN RECOMMENDS USDOC SERIOUSLY CONSIDER THIS PROPOSAL BUT NOTES (A) TIME VERY SHORT TO HAVE EVERYTHING IN PLACE FOR APRIL OPENING DATE OF BUILDEX 76 AND (B) HOTEL SPACE HERE WILL BE TIGHT. POSTPONEMENT OF BUILDEX 76 TO LATE IN YEAR SHOULD, THEREFORE BE CONSIDERED. ALSO, CONGEN ASKS USDOC TO CONSIDER SCALED-DOWN EXHIBITION PROPOSAL WHICH WOULD FOCUS ON ANNUAL US TRADE PROMOTION EVENT IN DHAHRAN AT MODEST COST. FINALLY, BUSINESSMAN INVOLVED IN DISCUSSIONS HERE RE BUILDEX 76 WILL BE IN WASHINGTON AFTERNOON JANUARY 5 TO MAKE HIS REPORT DIRECTLY TO CAGNE AND WILL ELABORATE ON POINTS MADE IN THIS MESSAGE (END SUMMARY)

2. OVER NEW YEAR WEEKEND, CONGENOFF WAS INTRODUCED TO C.A.

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ECKERT, PRESIDENT, EQUIPMENT & TECHNOLOGY INTERNATIONAL, INC (ETI),

RESTON, VIRGINIA, BY RESIDENT AMCIT. ECKERT, TRAVELING WITH AN ASSISTANT, HAS COMPLETED QUICK TOUR OF GULF TO DRUM UP BUSINESS FOR COMPANY HE REPRESENTS: SEAMAN INTERNATIONAL, MANUFACTURE OF "PORTOMOD" A FRAME AND FABRIC STRUCTURE. ECKERT EXPLAINED THAT HE WAS ENCOURAGED INFORMALLY BY CAGNE STAFF MEMBER (MANZOLILLA) TO SEEK OUT PROSPECTIVE BUYERS OF PORTOMOD WHO WOULD, IN TURN, LEASE OUT UNIT TO USDOC TO HOUSE BUILDDEX 76.

3. PRIOR TO CALLING ON CONGEN, ECKERT HELD TALKS WITH TWO POSSIBLE BUYERS (ONE IN RIYADH AND ONE NEAR DHAHRAN) BUT HE BELIEVES THEY HAVE ATTACHED TOO MANY QUALIFICATIONS TO MAKE THEIR PROPOSALS OF INTEREST TO USDOC. UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, IT HAD NOT BEEN SUGGESTED TO ECKERT THAT HE CALL ON CORPS OF ENGINEERS (COE) IN RIYADH TO ASSESS THEIR REQUIREMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH EXHIBITION HALL ARRANGEMENT WORKED OUT BETWEEN COE AND EMBASSY, JIDDA. THIS UNFORTUNATE, AS EMBASSY STILL BELIEVES COE REMAINS INTERESTED IN CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDING WHICH IT WOULD BUY AFTERWARDS ON BEHALF OF SAG (SEE REFTELS).

4. ECKERTS'S PROPOSAL FOR CONGEN COMPOUND HAS SPARKED OUR INTEREST AND IMAGINATION. TO UNDERSTAND OUR REACTION, ONE WHOULD APPRECIATE THAT CONGEN IS SITUATED IN SELF-CONTAINED COMPOUND WITH TWO SEVERAL ACRE TRACTS OF UNDEVELOPED LAND. ONE OF THESE IS CONTIGUOUS TO DHAHRAN ACADEMY WHICH IS AN AMERICAN RUN ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL. OVER YEARS CONGEN AND ACADEMY HAVE ENJOYED A HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP, AND ACADEMY IS IMPORTANT AND HIGHLY REGARDED PART OF LOCAL AMERICAN COMMUNITY. THE SCHOOL PROJECTS AN INCREASE NEXT YEAR TO 1150 STUDENTS, FROM 680 NOW. EVEN BEFORE ECKERT VISIT, ACADEMY HAD DISCUSSED WITH CONGEN ERECTION OF CIRCULAR PORTOMOD UNIT TO BE USED AS BADLY NEEDED MULTIPURPOSE FACILITY FOR GYM, AUDITORIUM AND OTHER USES. IN MEETING CALLED BY CONSUL GENERAL, ECKERT, CONGEN'S ECON/CML AND ADMIN STAFF, TOGETHER WITH KEY MEMBERS OF ACADEMY SCHOOL BOARD, REVIEWED AND CONSIDERED TWO COURSES OF ACTION.

5. BUILDDEX 76: ECKERT CAREFULLY EXPLAINED USDOC'S SPACE REQUIREMENTS FOR BUILDDEX 76 AS BEING SATISFIED BY 202' LONG BY 72' WIDE UNIT WHICH COULD BE DIVIDED INTO TWO UNITS. ACADEMY CERTAIN IT COULD USE ONE SUCH UNIT AND POSSIBLY TWO IF ITS QUESTIONS REGARDING LATER CONVERSION OF ONE STRUCTURE INTO CLASSROOM BUILDING COULD

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BE RESOLVED AFFIRMATIVELY. CONGEN ADMIN STAFF DID BACK-OF-ENVELOPE COSTING OF PARKING, SANITARY, AND LIGHTING REQUIREMENTS. USING ECKERT'S PORTOMOD PRICES (WHICH INCLUDED AIR FREIGHTING STRUCTURES TO DHAHRAN) TOTAL PRICE TAG CAME TO APPROX \$500,000 SUBJECT TO REVISION IF MANUFACTURE DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE AND AFTER CLOSER COST ESTIMATES OF SITE PREPARATION HAVE BEEN MADE. ONE IMPORTANT ELEMENT LEADING TO COST REDUCTION WOULD BE AIR FREIGHT IF USAF COULD BE PERSUADED TO AIRLIFT UNITS TO MAC FLIGHT TERMINAL AT INTERNATIONAL

AIRPORT LOCATED BARELY ONE MILE FORM CONGEN COMPOUND.

6. ALTHOUGH WE BELIEVE PROPOSAL WORKED OUT WITH ECKERT HAS MUCH TO COMMEND IT, WE RECOGNIZE TWO SHORTCOMINGS. IF MID-APRIL EXHIBITION SCHEDULE IS ADHERED TO, WE WISH TO NOTE THAT THREE-MONTH TIME SPAN VERY VERY TIGHT. ANY SLIPS IN SITE PREPARATION COULD CAUSE LAST-MINUTE CANCELLATION OF SHOW WITH ALL THE CONSEQUENCES WHICH ACTION ADDRESSEES CAN READILY IMAGINE. WITH SAUDI PORTS EXTREMELY

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PA-02 SIL-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 DODE-00 /048 W

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O R 051325Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

TO USDOC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4551

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

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CONGESTED, EXHIBITORS WOULD HAVE LITTLE CHANCE OF GETTING THEIR PRODUCTS TO THE SITE ON TIME. FURTHER, A CRASH PROJECT WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY RAISE THE TOTAL COST SUBSTANTIALLY. OTHER FACTOR IS AVAILABILITY OF HOTEL SPACE. SITUATION DIFFICULT AND LIKELY TO BECOME MORE SO AS ARABIAN AMERICAN OIL COMPANY (THROUGH CONTRACTORS) NOW BRINGING IN THOUSANDS OF MEN TO IMPLEMENT GIGANTIC EXPANSION PROGRAM. WE DOUBT THERE WOULD BE SUFFICIENT HOTEL SPACE AVAILABLE TO (A) TAKE CARE OF EXHIBITOR REQUIREMENTS AND (B) PROVIDE ACCOMODATIONS FOR VISITORS WHO WILL WANT (PROBABLY ON SHORT NOTICE) TO COME FROM OTHER PARTS OF KINGDOM AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES TO ATTEND FAIR. CONSEQUENTLY WE URGE THAT BUILD EX 76, IF IT IS TO BE SITED IN DHAHRAN, BE POSTPONED UNTIL WINTER 76/77.

7. DHAHRAN AS SITE FOR ANNUAL US TRADE EXHIBITION: AS ACADEMY IS VERY INTERESTED IN PURCHASE OF PORTOMOD FOR GYM/AUDITORIUM

BUILDING, DHAHRAN COMMAND CONSIDERATION AS POSSIBLE LOCATION FOR ANNUAL TRADE PROMOTION EVENT. BY PARTICIPATING (AND HOLDING OUT PROMISE OF RENTAL INCOME TO SCHOOL) IN PLANNING SIZE AND SHAPE OF PORTOMOD, WE FORESEE AN EXHIBITION UNIT BEING CONSTRUCTED HERE WHICH WOULD NOT ONLY MEET THE NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL BUT ALLOW US TO HAVE EXHIBITION SITE THAT WOULD BE ADEQUATELY EQUIPPED FOR STAGING OF TRADE PROMOTION EVENTS. SAUDI ARABIA (AND NEARBY STATES) ARE IMPORTANT AND RAPIDLY GROWING MARKETS FOR US EXPORTERS. FOR MODEST ANNUAL BUDGET, POTENTIAL BUYERS WOULD BE ABLE TO CONSIDER UNCLASSIFIED

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PRODUCTS AVAILABLE FROM US EXPORTERS AT MUCH CLOSER RANGE THAN IS PRESENTLY CASE. WHEN MAKING THIS SUGGESTION WE ALSO PROPOSE THAT ANNUAL EXHIBITION BE HELD EACH SPRING TO COINCIDE WITH ACADEMY'S SPRING VACATION SCHEDULE. BY SCHEDULING EVENT WHEN CLASSROOMS ARE EMPTY, EXHIBITORS COULD BE OFFERED ADEQUATE ALBEIT SPARTAN SLEEPING ACCOMODATIONS AND SOME CLASSROOMS COULD ALSO DOULBE AS OFFICE SPACE DURING PERIOD EXHIBITION IS OPEN. TO SET THIS PLAN IN MOTION, HOWEVER, WE CONVINCED IT MUST BE REQUIREMENT THAT USDOC EMPLOY COMPETENT ARCHITECT/DESIGNER TO COME IN AND WORK WITH ACADEMY TO DEVELOP PLAN THAT IS FUNCTIONAL FOR NEEDS OF BOTH USG AND ACADEMY AND TO INSURE PROJECT HAS DESIGN THAT SPAR

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CREATIVITY AND IMAGINATION. PERHAPS TRADE CENTER/BEIRUT CAN PROPOSE COMPETENT INDIVIDUAL FOR PURPOSE. CONGENOFF RECALLS THAT OLD US TRADE CENTER IN BANGKOK CONTRACTED SEVERAL TOP-FLIGHT EXHIBITION DESIGNS FROM THAI ARCHITECT AT VERY ATTRACTIVE PRICE. HE WAS DESIGNER OF PERMANENT US PAVILION ON JAKARTA FAIR GROUNDS AND, THEREFORE, IS FAMILIAR WITH PROBLEMS PRESENT IN NEW EXHIBITION PROPOSAL WE MAKE HERE.

8. FOREGOING PULLED TOGETHER ON VERY SHORT NOTICE AND WILL REQUIRE FURTHER REFINEMENTS AS WE TAKE LONGER LOOK AT OUR PROPOSALS. HOWEVER, WE PROVIDE OUR THINKING NOW AS ECKERT PRESENTLY TRAVELLING TO WASHINGTON TO MAKE HIS REPORT IN PERSON TO CAGNE. ECKERT HAS LEFT HIS ASSISTANT HERE TO FOLLOW THROUGH WITH ANY INSTRUCTIONS COMING OUT OF HIS CONSULTATION WITH CAGNE THIS WEEK. HOPEFULLY CAGNE CAN PROVIDE US WITH ITS PRELIMINARY REACTIONS BEFORE COB (WASHINGTON-TIME) JANUARY 6. NOTE CONGEN IS CLOSED JANUARY 8 & 9 AND ANY MESSAGES DURING THAT TIME SHOULD BE TRANSMITTED "NIACT IMMEDIATE" INDICATORS SO THAT WE CAN RELAY INSTRUCTIONS TO ECKERT'S ASSISTANT ASAP.  
BUSHNELL

NOTE BY OC/T: PARA 7 # AS RECEIVED. CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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**Concepts:** n/a  
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